



# STEPS TO A HEALTHIER US

## BACKGROUND

The Washington State Department of Health is coordinating programs for small cities and rural communities in the state as part of the Steps to a Healthier US project. This is made possible by one of 12 grants awarded by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services to promote better health and prevent chronic disease. In addition to the state-wide grant, Public Health-Seattle & King County has been funded in the large cities category. Washington is the only state to receive two Steps grants. Extensive coordination will occur between the two grants. This five-year project focuses on preventing and managing asthma, diabetes and obesity, and addressing three related risk factors -- physical inactivity, poor nutrition and tobacco use.

### *Purpose*

- Prevent diabetes in populations at risk of developing the disease
- Diagnose diabetes early
- Reduce complications of diabetes and asthma
- Reduce the number of overweight and obese people
- Prevent obesity

### *Goals*

- Improve nutrition
- Boost physical activity
- Prevent tobacco use and exposure
- Help people quit smoking
- Increase use of appropriate health-care services
- Improve the quality of care for persons with asthma, diabetes and obesity
- Help people with chronic diseases manage their own care

## PARTNERSHIP

Each community is forming a local coalition to guide their work. Local and state level partners and coalition members include a diverse group of health-related public and private organizations, associations and schools around the state. The Steps for a Healthier US project includes important partnerships between schools and education agencies at both the local and state level. A key partner will be the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction. A Community-State Leadership Group will provide overall guidance to the project in Washington. The four communities and lead agencies funded through the Department of Health grant are:

- Chelan/Douglas and Okanogan Counties (Chelan/Douglas Health District)
- Community Choices 2010 in Clark County
- Thurston County (Thurston County Public Health and Social Services)
- Confederated Tribes of the Colville Reservation

## FUNDING

The Steps for a Healthier US program is funded through 2008 by a cooperative agreement with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention to develop, implement, and evaluate program components. Federal guidelines require that 75 percent of program funds go directly to STEPS communities. The first year award is \$1.5 million for the state-coordinated grant. In subsequent years, \$7 million each year through the fifth year has been requested.

## Contact

Lauren Jenks  
(360) 236-3843  
[lauren.jenks@doh.wa.gov](mailto:lauren.jenks@doh.wa.gov)